

Community Petition gains momentum for performing arts centre in King Township

Residents in King Township are rallying behind a growing petition calling for the development of a dedicated Performing Arts Centre through a public-private partnership. Visitors attending Arts Society King's inaugural ARTROAM Art Show and Sale on April 11 and 12 may have noticed volunteers collecting signatures in support of the initiative. The petition asks for approval of a public-private partnership to build a Performing Arts Centre in King Township, and 72 signatures were gathered during the event alone, with efforts now underway to collect many more. While the petition was visible at ARTROAM, organizers emphasize that this is not an Arts Society King initiative, but rather a grassroots effort led by local residents who have long envisioned a professional theatre space to properly showcase the arts in the community. King Township is a vibrant and growing municipality with a strong appreciation for arts and culture. Supporters say a dedicated performing arts centre would become a vital cultural hub providing accessible programming, supporting local artists, and enriching the lives of residents. According to the Ontario Arts Council, communities with active arts programs experience 36 per cent higher job growth than those without, highlighting the broader economic and social benefits arts infrastructure can bring. There has been much discussion around what such a facility could look like. Some envision the retrofit of an existing building, while others support a new development built in partnership with a private developer. Known as a Public-Private Partnership, or P3, this model has been successfully used in many communities and often results in buildings with longer life spans on average 20 years longer than traditional public buildings. One notable example comes from Ottawa, where the Great Canadian Theatre Company partnered with a developer and the City of Ottawa to create the Irving Greenberg Theatre Centre a mixed-use condominium and theatre facility that has become a model for future P3 projects across Ontario. The project combined private investment, municipal support, government funding, and community fundraising to bring the vision to life. Locally, the King Performing Arts Committee (K-PAC) envisions a similar facility featuring a welcoming lobby-lounge with an art gallery, a flexible 250-300 seat theatre with retractable tiered seating for performances and event rentals, and full staging for theatre, music, dance, film screenings, and community events. The preferred location for this proposed condo-theatre development would be the current King City Arena site. Supporters note the location offers strong advantages, including nearby cafés and restaurants, access to YRT bus routes and GO Train service, and convenient walkability for many local residents and seniors. Projects of this scale take time the Ottawa case study took between 10 and 12 years to complete making early community support essential. With the continued growth of professional theatre in the Township, including the exciting 2026 season from King Theatre Company featuring the Canadian premiere of *Alias Grace* by Margaret Atwood, advocates say now is the time to begin planning for the future of performing arts in King. Residents wishing to support the petition can sign online at: <https://www.change.org/KingTownship-PerformingArtsCentre> to digitally sign the petition. Fill in your First and Last Name, enter your email address and click on 'Sign Petition'; the next page will ask if you would like to 'Chip in,' you do not need to, simply click on the 'No, I'll share instead' button; if you do not want to share, scroll past the 'share' button and click on the 'Skip for now'; on the next page scroll down and click on the word 'Skip.' The petition will be presented to local council and staff at a future date. Those interested in becoming more involved can contact Michele McNally at michele.siebler.mcnally@gmail.com.